



**THE HON. JOEL FITZGIBBON MP
Minister for Defence**

**THE HON. WARREN SNOWDON MP
Minister for Defence Science and Personnel**

Saturday, 2 May 2009

**GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL
INVESTMENT IN AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE
HEALTH CARE**

The Minister for Defence, the Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP, and the Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, the Hon Warren Snowdon MP, announced today that the Government will invest almost \$150 million over the next four years on Defence health care improvements.

“The Government is committed to improving mental health support to Defence members and will implement the recommendations of the independent *Review of Mental Health Care in the Australian Defence Force and Transition through Discharge*, conducted by Professor David Dunt,” Mr Snowdon said.

“Current rates of deployment are very high and the future outlined in the White Paper is one where the nation will continue to ask a lot of our uniform men and women. It is vital we care for them and their needs, as they serve the needs of Australia.

“A key priority for Government is the timely and affordable delivery of high-quality health care to support all Defence members in Australia and on operations,” Mr Snowdon said.

“In an environment where health care costs are growing, Defence needs to reform its health care delivery options to better achieve patient satisfaction and efficiency.

“Defence will also develop strategic alliances with State Government and private institutions to provide inpatient health care to Defence members from state of the art facilities, as well as allowing for increased access to clinical research opportunities,” Mr Snowdon said.

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These changes will offer opportunities for uniformed Defence health providers to work in tertiary level health facilities with improved training and continuous professional development opportunities.

Australian Defence Force members will be provided with primary outpatient and low dependency inpatient health care through improved delivery and management of clinical services at Defence facilities. Higher level inpatient care will also be provided by a small number of Defence facilities. This will include integrated health workforce solutions by uniformed members, Australian Public Servants and contracted health care providers.

Mr Snowdon said Defence will also provide direct and practical assistance to critically ill and or injured personnel through the discharge process.

“Military case managers will be available to the injured member and their family on a fly in fly out basis, and will assist with the medical discharges process in relation to compensation, superannuation, rehabilitation and conditions of service benefits.”

The 2009 Defence White Paper represents the most comprehensive statement on Defence ever produced. It affirms the Government’s commitment to the defence of Australia, the protection of our sovereign interests and the security and stability of our region.

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